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Robert S. Allen - Paul Scott Report

Brush Fire War Power Sought

CPYRGHT

WASHINGTON — President Kennedy is facing up to the explosive possibility that the U.S. may soon find it necessary to intervene with military force in Cuba.

In a private White House briefing, the President told congressional leaders that he is preparing to send to Congress a new request "for about a billion dollars to beef up this country's capability to fight a limited war in Cuba or anywhere else in the world if that should become necessary."

HE REPORTED that the new money will go for increases in firepower and manpower of the Army and Marine Corps. A selected number of units of both services will be put on emergency "alert" to be prepared for any eventuality.

Also, a new sea-air life will be developed for 10,000 special troops that are to be trained to fight guerrilla warfare. The Army now has about 3,000 of these jungle fighters. The sea-air life will include a seaplane troop capability which the Navy does not now possess.

The new funds will be in addition to the \$42.9 billion already requested by the President in his defense budget for the fiscal year that starts July 1.

IN HIS briefing of the legislators, the President stressed that the limited war preparations must be rushed because of "the seriousness of

the Cuban situation" and "the growing possibility that the U. S. may be forced to intervene in more than one area at the same time."

"Khrushchev may force us to intervene militarily in Cuba whether we want to or not," said the President. "There are no signs that he has ordered a halt in the flow of Communist arms. The Navy says that the traffic of Iron Curtain ships to Havana is increasing steadily. I don't plan to sit idly by while the Kremlin equips Castro with an airforce and navy second only to our own in this hemisphere."

"I am sure that I speak for a majority of the persons here, when I tell you that Congress will support any action, including military intervention, if you believe that it is necessary to protect the security of this country," said Senator Richard Russell (D., Ga.), chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. "Congress will approve whatever funds you request."

The other Democratic leaders quickly followed Senator Russell in pledging their support.

NOTE: President Kennedy is telling his closest friends in Congress that no heads will roll immediately at the Central Intelligence Agency over the abortive anti-Castro landings in Cuba. Instead, he says CIA Director Allen Dulles and Richard Bissell, a deputy CIA director for planning, will quit in "two or three months" after everything quiets down. Bissell was slated to succeed the 64-year-old Dulles in November. However, the President is now looking for a successor outside the agency.



Mr. Allen